

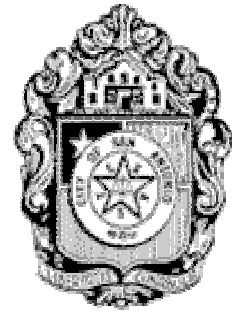
Critical Incident Stress Management

Special Thanks to the San Antonio Police Departments Victims Advocacy Section for producing this document



CRITICAL INCIDENT

An extraordinary event or series of events that is sudden, overwhelming and often dangerous to oneself or to a significant other.



Characteristics

- **Sudden Onset** – unexpected and /or unplanned
- **Life-threatening** – a direct threat like someone shooting at you or indirect like seeing someone else hurt or killed.
- **Threat to Self** – your sense of what makes you worthwhile is threatened.
- **Threat to values** – core values like the value of life, the meaning of life and the worth of life are threatened.

Stages

- **Impact** – from the time the threat is felt until you no longer have to think about it – usually 0-72 hours.
- **Recoil** – from the time you aren't asked about incident until you return to normal functioning. Usually 6-8 weeks.
- **Adaptation** – restoration of normal functioning. Usually: 8 weeks on.
- **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** – after 8 weeks, if you are still experiencing significant symptoms, contact qualified Mental Health Professional.

SELF HELP STRATEGIES

Mild to moderate exercise

Good nutrition

Accept your feelings

Talking to a trusted friend or family member

Redefine success

Relaxation/mediation technique

Recognize that incident is not your fault

Keep a journal and document the positive that come out of the incident

Recognize that critical incidents take time to make a part of your life

Accept you vulnerability

Recognize that stress is temporary

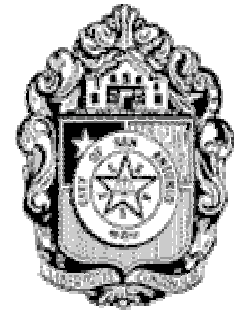
Recognize that there are other important areas in your life

Look out for each other Be aware of friends and family
Neighborhood watch reach out to others in your community
network

Telephone

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Signs and Symptoms

Increased fear of injury or death
Nightmares
Withdrawal from others
Irritability and anger
Difficulty sleeping
Appetite Change
Increase use of alcohol/drugs
Family problems
Increased physical problems like
headaches, upset stomach, digestive
problems and aches & pains
Startle response
Poor memory
Difficulty making decisions
Concentration problems
Grief-sadness
Depression-hopelessness, helplessness
Numbing

Resources

Police Emergencies.....911
United Way Help-line 24 Hour / Day – Hotline..... (210) 227-4357
Victims Advocacy Section-SAPD.....(210) 207-2141
Victims Assistance Liaison- SAPD.....(210) 207-7635
Battered Women’s Shelter.....(210) 733-8810
Rape Crisis Center, Crisis Line.....(210) 349-RAPE
American Red Cross.....(210) 224-5151
Bexar County Medical Society.....(210) 301-4368
National Health Association of San Antonio.....(210) 614-7566